

January 15, 2024

Hon. Pamela K. Chen

I hope this letter finds you in good health. I am writing to you as the fourth sister of Michael Goklu, expressing my deep concern and seeking your understanding regarding my brother, his conviction and what it means to the whole family who has always depended upon him. I am textile engineer and I can tell you that I was able to go to school only because my brother supported me and paid for my education in both Germany and in Turkey. We are 5 sisters and 2 brothers and he was the oldest one and he really had a lot to face as he was 21 and our youngest sibling was 7 years old when our father died.

The adversity our family faced was at a young age when we lost our father very unexpectedly in a car accident. The other driver was drunk and he hit my father who was in the right seat (not the driver seat) – the driver survived but my father died. No one was ready for that and we were all in total shock. It was Michael who had to be responsible as that is our culture and he selflessly dedicated himself to supporting our family. Without taking a penny from our father's pension, he worked tirelessly to send money all his income to Germany for the education of our family's girls as he was not the type to say that girls should not go to school.

Michael has been a father figure for us throughout our lives, and I know, from conversations with his wife and my friends, that he postponed personal pursuits to support our family. His absence has created significant challenges for my mother and us, as he was the guiding force behind many aspects of our lives. In the past five years, he faced immense sadness due to my mother's ongoing cancer treatment, for which we had to borrow money from various sources.

I sincerely hope for leniency in his sentencing, as I am confident that he has learned from this experience and will not involve himself in any shortcuts for financial gain. His intention was never to put us at risk, and he consistently prioritized our well-being over monetary pursuits.

I humbly request your consideration of Michael Goklu's genuine character, his selfless contributions to our family, and the challenging circumstances he faced. I believe that a fair and compassionate judgment will allow our family to reunite and move forward positively.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Canan GOKLU  
Bahcekent sitesi L1 Blok Daire 2  
Karatay / Gaziantep

Jan 9th 2023

Hon. Judge Pamela K. Chen

Your Honor Hon. Judge Pamela K. Chen,

I hope this letter finds you in good health and high spirits. My name is Nevin GOKLU, 37 Years old Mother of one son and one daughter and I am German language teacher at college. I am writing to you as the proud sister of Michael GOKLU. I understand the gravity of the circumstances surrounding his case, and I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some insights into his character.

Michael GOKLU, has always been a source of inspiration and support in my life. He was kind of my father when we lost our father at traffic accident April 16 1996 at young age, known for his unwavering integrity, compassion, and dedication to family and community. He was the one work long hours and spent all money to our education in both/ Germany and Turkey. He was tracking everything for our schools like a father, even their own family building having kids, delayed for me and my family, and money and time that he spent for 5 sister's and 1 brother, And he is still same for my mother ongoing cancer also, Micheal find doctors, tracking everything and including surgery, He was always same and work tirelessly for our family and when they keep postponed their own family, His was Tugba is one of my best friends also and I know how hard they tried to have kid before. And this case put them in very hard position but His wife Tugba wants to have kid after 20 years no matter what, Conditions because they have been already late.

Michael follows all our kids in our family always making sure they are educated and a teacher for all our kids, I owe personally to him my college degree because he was the one who encourage support for college for me in Germany. He spent a lot time and money and encouraged all his sisters to go for university regardless of other relatives usually do not want their sisters or daughters continue after high school, and now still always ask my daughter also how she study and what school in future that she want to go,

Michael's personality always friendly, democratic, and not have prejudgement to any kind. Please consider these aspects of Michael's character when making decisions regarding his case.

Thank you for your time and consideration in my brother's case. I trust that justice will be fair and just.

Sincerely,

Nevin Goklu Balci

German Teacher at college of Urfa lisesi,

Sanliurfa / Turkey

December 13, 2023

Hon. Judge Pamela K. Chen

My name is Tugba Gunduz Goklu. I have known Michael Goklu for more than 23 years—some years as friends, then dating, and finally, 13 years in marriage. I have been working at Turkish Airlines in the code-share department for 17 years. I am the youngest of two brothers and five sisters, mirroring my husband's family who also has 5 sisters and 2 brothers.

Michael works tirelessly, putting in at least 12-20 hours a day, 6-7 days a week as an Uber driver. Sometimes, he even sleeps in his car for a few hours between late fare drops from NYC and early airport pickups. Despite the challenges, he is a hardworking person who dedicates himself to providing for his family. We both wanted to have children shortly after getting married, but unfortunately, we lost our baby during pregnancy.

This, coupled with the strain of Michael's long working hours as a driver – he drives for Uber, Doordash and food delivery. No one in our family (between us we have 14 brothers and sisters) has used or sold drugs; it is not in our culture. I think he bought bitcoin because in our country Turkey it is not a crime and one is completely free to buy it. He was dreaming to save enough to down payment for a house so when we have another child. He was always a helpful person to all my family. During the time my brother had cancer (what type of cancer), Michael did all he could [what did he do?]. Michael would talk to the doctors and the hospital staff and find out what was going on with my brother. He would rally my brother's friends to go and visit him and support him. When my brother was in a lot of pain, Michael searched for medicine that would help and save my brother. It did not work; My brother died when he was 35 years old. We both always help anyone around us that need help. For the last five years we cook a little extra for Laura's mother Lia who is 102 years old Lia.

When I heard about Michael's arrest, I immediately came to the USA just days after it happened. Michael was completely broken first by the arrest and then by the conviction. I firmly believe in his innocence. Our lives will become very difficult without him, so I ask you not to send him to jail. I've already faced challenges as a single mom, changing houses three times in the last 18 months, and managing a job that requires 24-hour availability as I work for Turkey Airlines.

Michael takes care of our son when he is 3 and a half years old, and me especially after my C-section birth during the COVID pandemic. I was very sad as I was struggling with family members' [is this your brother] cancer in Turkey for more than two months. I've requested a relocation to the New York office but still do not

have that re-location. I do not make enough money and my salary is insufficient for survival as a single mother. Our plan was to save money to relocate or buy a house and prepare for having kids. We are already struggling, having lost my brother and father to cancer in the same year. Now, my sister and Michael's mother are also battling cancer.

Michael's TLC license has been stripped, and there are no more cars for Black Taxi licenses. He has lost ten years' worth of served and faithful customers. We cannot survive in the United States without Michael. My son is in pre-k school and sometimes I have to take him to my work as the day care closes at 5:30 p.m. and I work until 11:30 p.m. If I start the day at 5:30 p.m. then I work until 8:30am and then I have to take him to office. My mother is 89 years old and cannot help me.

We are drained to zero all our life savings. Michael's mother has cancer and she needs surgery. My sister also has uterine cancer and I am exhausted. The only person who can support me is Michael and I am very worried that he will not be with me to raise his son.

I thank you for reading my letter.  
Tugba Gunduz Goklu.

**Jan 9th 2023**

**Hon. Judge Pamela K. Chen**

**Your Honor**

**My Name is Soner Ozkan,**

**I m a friend of Michael And stayed at same home for my first 3 years,**

**I am writing to you as the proud friend of Michael GOKLU. I understand the gravity of the circumstances surrounding his case, and I would like to take this opportunity to provide you with some insights into his character.**

**Michael GOKLU, has always been a source of inspiration and support in my life.**

**I have a kidney failure and in dialysis everyday basis, Michael did a lot for me. First time when come to US at begging Michael Helped me for almost everything, Getting a license, buying a car for working putting me on the road, setp by step from green card to to my us citizenship, I know it is not only me he help several common friends also, I'm having some sort help from also today, Going to hospital and during my hard days due to my illness, Currently waiting on the wait list for organ donor kidney transplantation, I lived in same house with him also, for 3 years and I know his personalty very well,**

**We both was helping our landlord 95 years old and neighbor Lia who's is 102 years old, we both do shop for them sometime doctor trips , any kind of support for them,**

**Losing his help will effect my life also, any kind of hospital processing I keep as Michael for his help, kindly always has time very exodus personality and always will help me also,**

**He was the one who help for everything tirelessly answered and helped to me and my wife as well, Before I started to being able work Micheal give room and help all my spendings at car down payment credit building buying a car, insurance many of this owes I paid years later he never asked single time,**

**I firmly believe that Michael, deeply regrets any actions that may have led to his current situation. He is committed to making amends and learning from this experience to become a better person.**

**It is my sincere hope that Your Honor will consider these aspects of Michael's character when making decisions regarding his case. I believe in his capacity for positive change and rehabilitation, and I am confident that he will emerge from this experience as a more responsible and contributing member of society.**

**Thank you for your time and consideration.**

**Sincerely,**

**Soner Özkan  
347 859 0365**

**899 JFK Blvd E 2A  
Weehawken, NJ 07086**





UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

- - - - - X

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, : 19CR386(PKC)  
Plaintiff, :  
-against- : United States Courthouse  
MUSTAFA GOKLU, : Brooklyn, New York  
Defendant. : Thursday, October 6, 2022  
: 9:00 a.m.  
:

- - - - - X

TRANSCRIPT OF CRIMINAL CAUSE FOR PRETRIAL CONFERENCE  
BEFORE THE HONORABLE PAMELA K. CHEN  
UNITED STATES DISTRICT JUDGE

A P P E A R A N C E S:

For the Government: United States ATTORNEY'S OFFICE  
Eastern District of New York  
271 Cadman Plaza East  
Brooklyn, New York 11201  
BY: GILLIAN KASSNER, ESQ.  
MARIETOU E. DIOUF, ESQ.  
FRANCISCO NAVARRO, ESQ.  
Assistant United States Attorneys

For THE DEFENDANT: MURRAY E. SINGER, ESQ.  
14 Vanderventer Avenue, Suite 147  
Port Washington, New York 11050  
SAHLI LAW PLLC  
195 Broadway, 4th Floor  
New York, New York 11211  
BY: EMILEE SAHLI, ESQ.

Court Reporter: SOPHIE NOLAN  
225 Cadman Plaza East/Brooklyn, NY 11201  
NolanEDNY@aol.com

*Proceedings recorded by mechanical stenography, transcript  
produced by Computer-Aided Transcription*

O'KAIN - CROSS - MR. SINGER

382

1 Q And, in fact, Mr. Goklu indicated to you during the  
2 course of some of these transactions that he had actually lost  
3 money in the some of the transactions with you because of the  
4 change in the price of BitCoin?

5 A He did.

6 Q But in each one of the transactions, each time you met  
7 with him, he was making some money from the fee?

8 A Correct.

9 Q And losing money if the value of the BitCoin dropped?

10 A Correct.

11 MR. SINGER: Thank you, Ms. Sahli. I don't need  
12 that anymore.

13 Q Now, you indicated that your cover story as an undercover  
14 officer was that you were an online drug dealer selling drugs  
15 online in exchange for BitCoin, correct?

16 A Correct.

17 Q Now, in the text, the Signal text messages that you sent  
18 to Mr. Goklu, you never indicated to him that that's who you  
19 were and what you were doing, correct?

20 A Well, I --

21 Q Did you ever tell him that you were selling drugs  
22 directly?

23 A Yes.

24 Q In the text messages?

25 A No, not in the text messages.

O'KAIN - CROSS - MR. SINGER

383

1 Q Okay. So nothing ever came up in the text messages?

2 A No.

3 Q And when you first met with Goklu on -- Mr. Goklu on  
4 August 28th of 2018, you didn't tell him that you were selling  
5 drugs?

6 A Correct.

7 Q Or that your business was selling drugs and the BitCoin  
8 that you were seeking to exchange was from the sale of drugs;  
9 is that right?

10 A That's correct.

11 Q And you didn't tell him that on September 21st of 2018,  
12 correct?

13 A That's correct.

14 Q And you didn't tell him that in November of 2018; did  
15 you?

16 A I did not.

17 Q And you started to hint at it a little bit in December --  
18 on December 11th of 2018?

19 A Yes.

20 Q And that was the first time?

21 A Correct.

22 Q So prior to the December 11th meeting, was there any  
23 basis -- based on anything that you had told to Mr. Goklu, was  
24 there any reason for him to believe that you were selling --  
25 that the BitCoin that you were exchanging with him was from

O'KAIN - CROSS - MR. SINGER

384

1 the sale of illegal drugs?

2 A Can you repeat that question?

3 Q Well, I'll state it affirmatively.

4 There was no information that you had provided to  
5 Mr. Goklu in those first four conversations that would lead  
6 him to believe that the BitCoin had been obtained from selling  
7 illegal drugs; isn't that correct?

8 A Yeah. Not necessarily.

9 Q Not necessarily?

10 A He would -- I think if you could state that a different  
11 way. Well, I guess, I did not specifically state anything  
12 about drugs during those interactions, that's correct.

13 Q Well, in fact, you testified -- I think it was yesterday  
14 or maybe on Monday afternoon -- that Tuesday or Monday  
15 afternoon, that people -- well, the prosecutor had asked you  
16 whether you said anything in that first meeting about drugs  
17 and your answer was that people that are involved in the drug  
18 business don't talk about it openly; is that right?

19 A That's correct.

20 Q Right. The first rule of fight club is that you don't  
21 talk about fight club, right?

22 A So the movie goes.

23 Q So the movie goes.

24 And that's essentially is what your sayings, is the  
25 cultural of people who are involved in buying or selling or